

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CAIRO 13874 302112Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSM-03 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9712
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR EG IS
SUBJECT: ARAB LEAGUE ASSISTANT SECGEN ON PEACE PROCESS

1. DURING CALL BY POLCOUNS MAY 30 ON ARAB LEAGUE ASSISTANT SYG FOR PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS DR. MOHAMMED AL FARAH, HE MADE FOLLOWING CASE FOR DECISIVE U.S. ACTION ON PEACE PROCESS. (DR. AL FARRA, A PALESTINIAN, HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT SINCE ITS BEGINNING. HE HAS SERVED LAST FIVE YEARS IN PRESENT POSITION AND PRIOR TO THAT WAS FOR MANY YEARS JORDANIAN PERMREP TO UN. HE HOLDS JORDANIAN DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT AND MAY RETURN TO JORDANIAN DIPLOMATIC SERVICE AT END OF HIS ARAB LEAGUE CONTRACT AT END OF THIS YEAR. HE ALSO HAS U.S. GREEN CARD AND MANY CLOSE CONNECTIONS IN U.S.)

2. U.S. POLICY. FARRA READILY AGREED THAT POLICY OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION TOWARD MIDDLE EAST IS MORE EVEN-HANDED AND COHERENT THAN AT ANY TIME IN PAST. HE PARTICULARLY PRAISED PRESIDENT CARTER FOR HIS STATEMENTS WHICH HAVE OPENED UP NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR SETTLEMENT. U.S. ACTION IN GETTING ISRAEL TO SET DATE FOR ISRAELI

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PAGE 02 CAIRO 13874 302112Z

WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANON, AND GETTING AIRCRAFT PACKAGE THROUGH CONGRESS. ALL OF THESE WERE HOPEFUL SIGNS, BUT IN HIS VIEW PERIPHERAL TO CENTRAL ISSUE OF MOVING TOWARD REAL PEACE WHICH ARABS NOW READY FOR.

3. WHAT NEXT? FARRA HAD NO SUGGESTIONS AS TO WHAT OTHER PARTIES MIGHT CONTRIBUTE. SADAT HAD ALREADY DONE

MORE THAN U.S. HAD ASKED AND GOT NOTHING IN RETURN.
THEREFORE, OTHER ARAB MODERATES AND MODERATE ELEMENTS
OF PLO LEADERSHIP WERE UNWILLING TO MAKE NEW CONCESSIONS
TO ISRAEL AS LONG AS SADAT WAS LEFT EMPTY-HANDED. IN
SHORT, IT IS U.S. RESPONSIBILITY. AS TO WHAT U.S. CAN
NOW DO, FARRA BELIEVES IT SHOULD AVOID FURTHER PUBLIC
DECLARATIONS HOWEVER FAVORABLE THEY MIGHT BE. ARABS
ARE "SICK TO DEATH" OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS FROM ALL
PARTIES. HE PERSONALLY AVOIDS PRESS INTERVIEWS OR
PUBLIC APPEARANCES BECAUSE NOTHING HE CAN SAY IS CON-
VINCING TO UNIVERSALLY CYNICAL ARAB PUBLIC OPINION.

4. TIME IS OF ESSENCE. FARRA IS CONCERNED THAT U.S.
NOW STEPPING BACK AFTER BATTLE OVER AIRCRAFT PACKAGE
AND LEBANON WITHDRAWAL AND THAT U.S. DOES NOT REALIZE
URGENCY FOR PROGRESS BEFORE OCTOBER. POLCOUNTS DISPUTED
THAT THERE ANY LESSENING OF U.S. DETERMINATION. FARRA
SAID STAGE IS SET FOR U.S. TO COME OUT WITH COMPREHEN- .
SIVE PROPOSALS THAT LAY OUT SOLUTION AND PROGRAM FOR
ITS IMPLEMENTATION. HE RECOGNIZED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER
MUST CARRY U.S. CONGRESS WITH HIM, BUT BELIEVES THIS CAN
BE DONE BY GOING DIRECTLY TO THE PEOPLE AS AIRCRAFT PACK
AGE HAD PROVEN. IF U.S. WERE TO TAKE THIS DECISIVE
STEP, PREFERABLY AFTER CONSULTATION WITH KEY MODERATE
ARAB STATES, FARRA BELIEVES IT WOULD NOT ONLY HAVE
U.S. PUBLIC BACKING, BUT PUBLIC SUPPORT OF MODERATE
ARAB STATES. AT SAME TIME, FARRA BELIEVES PM BEGIN
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 CAIRO 13874 302112Z

IS "HOPELESS" AND WILL NEVER GIVE UP HIS DREAM OF ERETZ
ISRAEL. THEREFORE ISRAELI LEADERSHIP CHANGE MAY BE
NECESSARY, BUT NO ISRAELI LEADER COULD, IN FINAL ANALY-
SIS, RESIST DETERMINED U.S. STAND.

5. COMMENT. FARRA'S VIEWS ARE UNFORTUNATELY WIDELY
SHARED BY MANY EGYPTIANS. THEY ARE BARREN OF ANY
SUGGESTIONS OR IMAGINATIVE THINKING OF WHAT PARTIES
OTHER THAN THE U.S. MIGHT DO. HE LOOKS ONLY TO THE
U.S. WHILE FARRA DEPLORES LACK OF ATTENTION U.S. GIVING
TO MODERATE PLO LEADERSHIP. HE HAD NO SUGGESTIONS ON
HOW TO STRENGTHEN MODERATE PALESTINIANS. MATTHEWS

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